

## **14. ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Bureau of Cultural Affairs (BCA) is the City agency responsible for the delivery of art and cultural services to the citizens of Atlanta. The goal is to facilitate access by the citizens of Atlanta to a broad range of arts and cultural activities.

### **INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT**

#### **CURRENT CONDITIONS**

Eight cultural facilities are managed or programmed by the BCA:

1. Atlanta Cyclorama: In 1996, the Atlanta Cyclorama received a new architectural gateway (designed by artist Carl Andree Davidt) and an entry plaza along with interior renovations as the result of an anonymous gift of \$665,000. Improvements include a redesigned lobby with new furniture; improved lighting system; new carpeting, wall covering, bathroom tiles, furniture and ceiling; state-of-the-art projection equipment; new landscaping; and a multi-lingual, synchronized translation system for non-English speaking visitors. In 1988, an anonymous gift of \$300,000 enabled the production of an introductory film on the Civil War narrated by renowned actor James Earl Jones.
2. Chastain Park Amphitheater: More than \$1.5 million was spent to renovate this facility. Improvements include an improved acoustical system and new seating.
3. Chastain Arts Center: Located in Chastain Park, this facility began its first art program in 1968 and is the oldest of the City's three arts centers. The center has been undergoing renovation since 1995 and recently an alarm system was added in 1999.
4. City Gallery at Chastain: Adjacent to the Chastain Arts Center, this gallery contains 2,000 square feet of exhibition space. The building underwent a complete renovation that was completed in 1989. An extensive landscaping program for the entire complex (including the arts center) was initiated.
5. City Gallery East: Located on the first floor of City Hall East adjacent to the lobby, this 8,000-square-foot gallery is the largest continuous exhibition space in Atlanta. Improvements have been ongoing since 1995 and there are plans to add office and reception areas to the gallery and entrance/exit facades to the corridor.
6. Gilbert House: Gilbert House is one of the City's arts and crafts centers. It also serves as a rental facility for meetings and social events. Built in 1865, Gilbert House is situated on 11 acres and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. In addition to Gilbert House, a caretaker's house and several outbuildings are situated on the property. The caretaker's house received major renovations in 1996 and an addition in 1999. (



8. Southeast Arts Center: This facility is located in the John C. Birdline neighborhood building adjacent to the Lakewood Fairgrounds and Amphitheater.
9. East by East Cultural Center: This facility was inaugurated as the Carlos C. Museum at City Hall East to house *Souls Grown Deep: African American Vernacular Art of the South* during the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. Since the Olympics, the East by East Cultural Center has been home to the ARTSCool Summer Apprentice program. Studio and rehearsal spaces make up this facility, which is slated for major renovations.

## **ANTICIPATED FUTURE CONDITIONS**

A number of key events and trends will require the City to place greater emphasis on the arts. In 2003 the City of Atlanta's Bureau of Cultural Affairs will produce a new community –wide arts plan.

National trends suggest the Atlanta of tomorrow will be characterized by more cultural diversity, and that women and minorities will play an increasingly important role. The arts will be a medium to address this increased diversity and social concerns (e.g., crime, youth, education) by seeking to identify, nurture and link diverse cultures to important shared goals. As both research and anecdotal histories have repeatedly shown, one of the proven social values of the arts is its ability to unify culturally and economically diverse populations by emphasizing people's common humanity.

1. The City needs to increase its funding to arts. While Atlanta has grown into an international city and the number of artists and arts organizations based here has increased, funding for Contracts for Arts Services, the vehicle through which the City makes art and cultural activities available to its citizens, has decreased by over 15% since 1997. By increasing the amount of money available to secure arts services, the quality of life within the City can be improved through increased economic activity and a heightened appreciation of the importance of the arts to the community. For example, increased funding would allow the City to re-institute its Community Based Partnerships program. This program has had a tremendous impact on youth in traditionally under-served areas, already involving young people from 10 of the 15 CODA target neighborhoods.
2. Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport (HAIA) provides many first- time visitors to Atlanta with their initial impression of the City. Public art can play a key role in assuring that this impression is both memorable and favorable. There is an effort on the way to enhance the quality of the art throughout the airport, including the main terminal, the individual concourses and the new Atrium.
3. The City allocates 1.5 percent of funds budgeted for certain capital projects to the installation of public artworks. Atlanta is now home to nearly 200 public artworks that the Bureau of Cultural Affairs is dedicated to maintaining and expanding through a host of development, education and outreach initiatives. A Public Art Master Plan adopted July of 2001 gives structure to public art stewardship in Atlanta while setting forth a series of policy measures and processes to enable the City to fulfill its public art objectives. An expanded program recommended by the Public Art Master Plan will broaden the definition, types and locations for public art in Atlanta while strengthening the administration and the inter-agency coordination for the planning,



siting and conservation of public art. The adoption of the Public Art Master Plan and changes to the existing ordinance will provide continued success of public art stewardship in Atlanta.

4. Working artists and arts professionals require a high level of technical and administrative support in order to market their work, develop wider audiences and expand their contributions to the community. There is a critical need to increase staffing for such innovative support and professional development initiatives as the Materials for the Arts Program, the City Gallery East and City Gallery at Chastain, the Public Art Program, the Arts and Education Program, and the various music programs of the bureau.
5. There is a need for more performance and exhibition venues.
6. Artists need low-cost living and working spaces.
7. Training facilities are needed for youth art programs.

## **CURRENT POLICIES**

### *MUNICIPAL ARTS ORDINANCE*

This policy, established in 1977 and amended in 2001, stipulates that all city-funded construction projects must include an amount equal to one half percent of the estimated cost of the project for works of art.

### *PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN*

The City's Public Art Master Plan recommends policies, procedures, administration, and funding for public art. In addition, the plan increases the ability of local artists to contribute in significant and beneficial ways to a broad range of matters involving aesthetics and public spaces, urban redevelopment and land use planning.

Other policies include:

1. Foster public interest and participation in the arts.
2. Educate citizens and public officials as to the value and contribution that arts and cultural events have made and can make to the community.
3. Encourage private financial support of the arts.
4. Promote local artists and involve citizens of all economic and social levels in arts and cultural planning and programming.
5. Foster and support local artists and grass roots arts groups such as theater, dance, music, literary, and visual arts organizations.



6. Heighten Atlanta's image as one of America's cultural leaders.
7. Expand the base of support for the arts.
8. Provide technical assistance to artists and organizations for the purpose of enhancing their impact on the community.
9. Maintain a strong staff capability to nurture and support the arts.

Short-term goals include:

1. Increase funding for Contracts for Art Services.
2. Adopt the updated Public Art Master Plan.

## **CURRENT PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS**

The Bureau of Cultural Affairs operates programs and projects in all of its eight facilities as well as at sites elsewhere throughout the City. Bureau programs fall into four categories: public art, performance art, outreach and public information, and contracts for arts services. The bureau also provides staffing and technical support for a wide range of art projects.

### ***ARTSCool***

This program is a unique initiative targeting youth that explores new concepts in art as an educational and development tool. ARTSCool is designed to provide young people ages 14 –18 with arts and job training, a salary and positive cultural experiences in order to enhance their personal development. In exchange, the program participants, called apprentices, work for eight (8) weeks during the summer with professional artists to create marketable artwork that is sold and exhibited throughout the City. Proceeds from sales are reinvested in the program in order to continue its growth and outreach.

### ***ATLANTA CIVIC CENTER***

The Atlanta Civic Center Theatre boasts the Southeast region's largest theatre, hosting nearly 5,000 guests, and the largest stage. Recent shows include the Broadway productions of *Miss Saigon*, *Showboat*, and the internationally acclaimed import, *Riverdance*. The ever-popular *Cirque Du Soleil* has selected the Civic Center parking lot as its southern home. With a newly renovated ballroom, the Civic Center is also a choice site for prestigious corporate meetings, galas, wedding receptions and other special events.

### ***ATLANTA CYCLORAMA***

Located in Grant Park and listed on the National Historic Register, the Atlanta Cyclorama features a 9,000-pound panoramic painting depicting the Battle of Atlanta. The painting, considered the largest in the world, was created in 1886 and restored in the 1979-82 with the help of several Atlanta-based artists. It is over 5 stories tall and 300 feet wide, and is



enhanced by a diorama - lifelike figures in Civil War costume and period props for a 3-dimensional effect.

After viewing a 14-minute film narrated by James Earl Jones, visitors experience the painting and diorama from a 184-seat revolving platform. Among the Civil War artifacts on display is "The Texas," one of the two steam locomotives involved in the Great Locomotive Chase of 1862. The Cyclorama bookstore offers one of the nation's best selections of books, videos and souvenirs on the Civil War era. The facility is available for receptions, weddings and other special events. The facility has undergone major restoration since 1996.

### *CHASTAIN ARTS CENTER*

Currently, approximately 30 part-time instructors teach from 30 to 45 courses each session including courses in frame making, oil and watercolor painting, figure and still life drawing, jewelry and metalsmithing, cloisonné enameling, stained glass and basketry. Art ventures serve children ages 5-12, and wheel pottery is available for ages 12 and up. Throughout the year, artists known regionally and nationally for their areas of expertise teach special topical workshops.

### *GILBERT HOUSE*

Gilbert House, a City landmark site, offers arts and crafts courses geared to all age groups. . The beauty and historical significance of the house and grounds make Gilbert House a popular site for meetings and events.

### *SOUTHEAST ARTS CENTER*

This art center is scheduled for replacement by a new center at South Bend Park. This new center will offer arts and craft classes, workshops, along with community events and programming.

### *CITY GALLERY AT CHASTAIN*

The goal of City Gallery at Chastain is to present exhibitions and programs that explore and impact public life, addressing the social and personal political issues of our time. Originally dedicated to crafts, the gallery has expanded its focus to include a wide range of artistic expressions and traditions, and presents exhibitions that address design, architecture and popular culture in an educational manner. Exhibitions showcase the work of artists from Atlanta as well as those from throughout the country. The gallery offers artists talks and special lectures and tours for school groups.

### *CITY GALLERY EAST*

The mission of City Gallery East is to present contemporary fine art produced by skilled, professional artists in an effort to positively affect the community and the careers of the participating artists. The gallery seeks to display work by local, regional, national and international artists that is innovative and stimulating. Education is a key component of



all gallery shows. Exhibitions are planned not only to provide the public with exposure to art but also to provide viewers with a context for understanding the art presented.

### *CHASTAIN PARK AMPHITHEATER*

One of the country's most unique outdoor entertainment facilities, Chastain Park Amphitheater offers evening concerts featuring national artists throughout the summer.

### *CONTRACTS FOR THE ARTS SERVICES*

Annually, the BCA awards approximately 60 contracts to individual artists and arts organizations involved in visual, media, performing and literary art projects as part of its mission to ensure quality and diverse cultural programming for Atlanta's citizens.

1. Arts Organizations: The Arts Organization contracts underwrite programs developed by organizations with small to mid-size budgets. Of special interest are projects that reach a cross section of the City and promote cultural diversity.
3. Community Cultural Development: Designed to support community organizations that develop arts programming, these contracts provide seed money for arts programming in order to attract other sources of support. The focus is on groups that offer programs in sections of the City not traditionally served by larger arts organizations.
4. Individual Artists: These contracts engage practicing, professional artists living in the City who work in the areas of visual arts, dance, literary arts, music, theater, media and interdisciplinary genres.
5. Major Arts Organizations: These contracts provide general operating support to organizations with budgets in excess of \$300,000 and that present programs or services to a large cross section of City residents. Organizations must exhibit high standards of artistic and administrative excellence to be eligible.

### *PERFORMANCE ART PROGRAMS*

1. Atlanta Jazz Festival: This event, one of the largest of its kind in the Southeast, traditionally takes place over Memorial Day weekend and features world-renowned jazz artists. Performances take place in Piedmont Park and around the City at other popular indoor and outdoor venues.

### *PUBLIC ARTS PROGRAMS*

1. Atlanta Hartsfield International Airport Public Art Program This comprehensive public art program was established when the airport was expanded in 1980. Most recently, the program has been expanded to accommodate the new International Concourse. This phase of the program includes approximately 60 newly purchased and commissioned works of art, rotating exhibitions, featuring art and artifacts from noted local museum collections.



2. The Bureau of Cultural Affairs Public Arts Program staff administers the one and one half percent for art program, and provide curatorial and management expertise along with coordination between the City and the arts community.
3. Art for City-Spaces: Acquires artwork and supports artist projects through juried selections, invitations, individual proposals, and community initiatives, Artists are given opportunities to develop new works or to continue major works in progress. Additionally, small-scale portable art works are purchased and made available for municipal spaces on a rotating basis.
4. Summer Murals Program: This program teams artists with children to collaborate on the development of area murals used to spruce up Atlanta neighborhoods. The summer mural program is an inter-departmental collaboration between the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs programs.
5. National Arts Program: This program offers cash awards and continuing education certificates to City employees and their family members who enter this annual, juried art exhibition. The goals of the program are to encourage creativity, enhance self-esteem and to build morale and camaraderie among City employees. The exhibition takes place in City Gallery East, adding to its reputation for community outreach.
6. Percent for the Arts: The Municipal Arts Ordinance was created in 1977 and stipulates that all City-funded construction projects must include an amount equal to 1.5% of the estimated cost of the construction project for works of art.







## 2004 CDP ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS CURRENT PROGAMS AND PROJECTS

**Project List 14-1: 2004 CDP Arts and Cultural Affairs Current Programs and Projects**

Arts and Cultural Affairs	Description	Initiation Year			Completion Year	COST x 1,000	Funding Source	Responsible Party	CIP #	NPU	CD
		1	5	15							
1	ARTSCooL	1			2003	120	General Fund	DPRCA	N/A	all	all
2	Atlanta Jazz Festival	1			2003	200	General Fund, Private	DPRCA	N/A	all	all
3	Contracts for Arts Funding	1			2003	500	General Fund	DPRCA	N/A	all	all
4	Exhibition Programs at City Gallery - Chastain	1			2003	20	General Fund	DPRCA	N/A	all	all
5	Exhibition Programs at City Gallery East	1			2003	20	General Fund	DPRCA	N/A	all	all
7	National Arts Program	1			2003	2	National Endowment for the Arts	DPRCA	N/A	all	all
8	Youth Arts Programs	1			2003	10	General Fund, CDBG	DPRCA	N/A	all	all
9	Public Arts Program	1			2003	140	Bond Projects	DPRCA	N/A	all	